

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT	
Project Name: Norval Electric underground powerline installation.	Proposed Implementation Date: Spring 2022
Proponent: NorVal Electric Cooperative, Inc. PO Box 951 Glasgow, MT 59230	
Type and Purpose of Action: The proponent proposes to install an underground power line within a right-of-way 20' wide (10' on either side of a centerline) across School Trust land in Daniels County.	
Location: N2NE4, W2SE4 of Section 15 Township 34N, Range 45E	County: Daniels

I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT	
1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.	NorVal Electric Cooperative submitted the ROW application to the Glasgow Unit Office (GUO).
2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:	DNRC manages the surface of these lands and no other agencies have jurisdiction over this project.
3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:	Action Alternative: Grant permission to the applicant to install the underground power line on School Trust land. No Action Alternative: Deny permission to the applicant to install the underground power line on School Trust land.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
RESOURCE	POTENTIAL IMPACTS
<p>4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compatible, or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?</p>	<p>The soil within the area of impact consists of Turner- Beaverton complex and silt loams with moderate slopes of 2-8% that are not unusual, fragile, or unstable.</p> <p>Action Alternative: There would be some soil disturbance required to install the line underground. Slight soil compaction would occur due to vehicle use.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no changes to soils.</p>
<p>5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality?</p>	<p>No important surface or groundwater resources are present within the area of impact. No water quality standards impact the project.</p> <p>Action Alternative: The proposed project would have no impact on the quality, quantity, and distribution of water.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative, there would be no impacts to water quality, quantity, and distribution.</p>
<p>6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?</p>	<p>This project is not influenced by any air quality regulations or zones. A short-term increase in vehicle traffic would result in a slight increase in dust and fuel emissions.</p> <p>Action Alternative: This type of project on the School Trust land would have minimal impact to the air quality.</p>

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
	No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to air quality.
7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?	<p>The area of impact is classified as grazing acreage. The vegetative community consists of native grasses and shrubs. No rare plant or cover types are present.</p> <p>Action Alternative: No permanent alteration of the vegetative community is expected to occur.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to the plant communities on the School Trust land.</p>
8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?	<p>The area of impact provides habitat for upland birds and mule deer.</p> <p>Action Alternative: Temporary disturbance would occur during installment. No lasting impacts would occur.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to the possible use of the School Trust land as wildlife habitat.</p>
9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Sensitive Species or Species of special concern?	<p>The area of impact is grazing acreage that is likely used as nesting habitat by upland birds. No wetlands or sensitive habitats located within the area of impact.</p> <p>The following species of concern are listed as being at least seasonally present in the vicinity of the project area.: Sprague's Pipit, Golden Eagle, Great Blue Heron, Burrowing Owl, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Greater Sage-Grouse, Baird's Sparrow,</p>

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
	<p>Bobolink, Loggerhead Shrike, Long-billed Curlew and McCown's Longspur.</p> <p>Action Alternative: The installation of the power line would have no significant impacts to the environmental resources and no changes to the general habitat in the area would occur.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to the environmental resources.</p>
10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	<p>Action Alternative: The area of impact contains no archaeological or paleontological resources.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impact to historical or archaeological sites under this alternative.</p>
11. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light?	<p>The area of impact is near a county road and visible to the public. However, the proposed power line would be buried underground and not visible upon installation except for signs that mark the route.</p> <p>Action Alternative: No significant impacts to the aesthetics of the School Trust land are expected.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to aesthetics associated with the School Trust land.</p>
12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project?	<p>Action Alternative: The proposed project would place no additional demands on environmental resources in the area.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no additional demands placed on</p>

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
	environmental resources of land, water, air or energy.
13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	<p>Action Alternative: There are currently no other known studies, plans or projects on this tract.</p> <p>Action Alternative: This project would not impact any other plans or studies that Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation has on the School Trust land.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to the plans or studies.</p>

III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION	
RESOURCE	POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	<p>Action Alternative: The installation of the line would require the use of heavy equipment which has inherent risks. No significant human health or safety impacts/concerns anticipated.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to human health or safety.</p>
15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	<p>The area of impact is classified as grazing acreage and is currently managed for livestock grazing.</p> <p>Action Alternative: The proposed project would have no economic impact on the agricultural activities on this tract.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to agricultural activities on the School Trust land.</p>
16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project	

create, move, or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	<p>Action Alternative: The project would not create nor impact any jobs in the area.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impact to quantity and distribution of employment under this alternative.</p>
17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	<p>Action Alternative: The project would have no impacts on the local and state tax base and tax revenues.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impact to the local and state tax base under this alternative.</p>
18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed?	<p>Action Alternative: The project would not create an additional demand for government services, nor would it impact traffic along existing roads.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no additional demand for government services.</p>
19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	<p>Action Alternative: No impacts to locally adopted environmental plans and/or goals are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this type of alternative there would be no impacts to locally adopted environmental plans and goals are anticipated.</p>
20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?	<p>There is potential for recreation and hunting on the School Trust land.</p> <p>Action Alternative: No changes to the public land access or recreation potential would occur.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the recreational values associated with the School Trust land under this alternative.</p>
21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the	Action Alternative: The project would not impact the density and

project add to the population and require additional housing?	<p>distribution of population and housing.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the density and distribution of population and housing.</p>
22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	<p>Action Alternative: The project would not disrupt the traditional lifestyles of the local community.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the social structures under this alternative.</p>
23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	<p>Action Alternative: The project would not impact the cultural uniqueness and diversity of this rural area.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the cultural uniqueness and diversity under this alternative.</p>
24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:	<p>Action Alternative: The installation of this powerline would add value to the tract, allow for more options in managing the tract in the future and should improve the lessee's ability to manage the State lease.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the economic circumstances under this alternative.</p>

EA Checklist Prepared By: s/Luke Gunderson\s Date: 11/1/2021
Luke Gunderson Land Use Specialist

IV. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:	Action Alternative
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	No significant impacts expected.
27. Need for Further Environmental Analysis: <input type="checkbox"/> EIS <input type="checkbox"/> More Detailed EA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Further Analysis	

EA Checklist Approved By: Matthew Poole Glasgow Unit Manager
Name Title

s/Matthew Poole\s Date: November 1, 2021
Signature